

NCCIC Is a Service of the Child Care Bureau

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THREE COMMUNICATION STYLES¹

	Passive	Assertive	Aggressive
Definition	Communication style in which you put the rights of others before your own, minimizing your own self worth	Communication style in which you stand up for your rights while maintaining respect for the rights of others	Communication style in which you stand up for your rights but you violate the rights of others
Implications to Others	My feelings are not important I don't matter I think I'm inferior	We are both important We both matter I think we are equal	Your feelings are not important You don't matter I think I'm superior
Verbal Styles	Apologetic Overly soft or tentative voice	I statements Firm voice	You statements Loud voice
Non-Verbal Styles	Looking down or away Stooped posture, excessive head nodding	Looking direct Relaxed posture, smooth and relaxed movements	Staring, narrow eyes Tense, clenched fists, rigid posture, pointing fingers
Potential Consequences	Lowered self esteem Anger at self Disrespect from others Pitied by others	Higher self esteem Self respect Respect from others Respect of others	Guilt Anger from others Disrespect from others Feared by others

¹ Based on work by Dr. Christopher L. Heffner, M.S. Available at www.cedanet.com/meta/communication_styles.htm